

**Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr.,
June 20, 1790, with Copy, from the Works of Thomas
Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected
and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.**

TO THOMAS MANN RANDOLPH J. MSS.

New York June 20. 1790.

Dear Sir, —Your favor of May 25. came to hand on the 5th. inst. I am infinitely pleased at your predilection for settling in Albemarle. Certainly no circumstance in life is so near my heart as to have you near me. This will fix beyond a doubt my intended visit to Virginia, in the fall, in order to see what arrangements may be taken for settling you in Albemarle. In the meanwhile perhaps it might be as well for you to defer purchasing the 100 acres of land you mention, unless indeed Colo. Randolph were disposed to let you have a part of Edgehill. I cannot but hope that he, you, & myself, contributing what we can, may be able to accommodate you with as much at least of Edgehill as Colo. Randolph seemed willing to sell to mr Harvie. On this subject I must propose a negotiation with him.—On enquiry I find that New England is not the place to look out for skilful farmers. That is scarcely a country where wheat is cultivated at all. The best farmers in America I am told are those on the Delaware. I shall take measures for knowing whether one can be got for you & at what price.

Congress are much embarrassed by the two questions of assumption, and residence. All proceedings seem to be arrested till these can be got over, and for the peace & continuance of the union, a mutual sacrifice of opinion & interest is become the duty of everyone: for it is evident that if every one retains inflexibly his present opinion, there will be no bill passed at all for funding the public debts, & if they separate without funding,

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there is an end of the government, in this situation of things. The only choice is among disagreeable things. The assumption must be admitted, but in so qualified a form as to divest it of it's injustice. This may be done by assuring to the creditors of every state, a sum exactly proportioned to the contribution of the state: so that the state will on the whole neither gain nor lose. There will remain against the measure only the objection that Congress must lay taxes for

these debts which might be better laid & collected by the states. On the question of residence, the compromise proposed is to give it to Philadelphia for 15. years, & then permanently to George town by the same act. This is the best arrangement we have now any prospect of, & therefore the one to which all our wishes are at present pointed. If this does not take place, something much worse will; to wit an unqualified assumption & the permanent seat on the Delaware. The Delegations of this state and Pennsylvania have conducted themselves with great honor and wisdom on these questions. They have by a steady (yet not a stipulated) concurrence avoided insidious baits which have been held out to divide them & defeat their object.

The revolution in Prance is still going on slowly & surely. There is a league of Prussia, Poland, Sweden & Turkey formed under the auspices of England & Holland against the two empires, who are scarcely in a condition to oppose such a combination. There is also a possibility of immediate war between England and Spain. The day before the mail of the last packet came away that is, on the 6th. of May, the king by a message to both houses, informed them of the capture of two British vessels by the Spaniards at Nootka sound, under a claim of exclusive right to those coasts, that he had demanded satisfaction, and was arming to obtain it. There was a very hot press of seamen, & several ships of war had already put to sea. Both houses unanimously promised support: & it seems as if they would insist on an unequivocal renunciation of her vague claims on the part of Spain.

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Perhaps they are determined to be satisfied with nothing less than war, dismemberment of the Spanish empire, and annihilation of their fleet.